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A Short
A N S W E R
To several
Q U E S T I O N S
P R O P O S E D

To a Gentleman of Quality, by a
Great Minister of State; not unfit for
these times of our continuing Divisions
(though Written when a General Indul-
gence of all Opinions was endeavoured to
be obtained).

Shewing the Authors judgement concerning
the publick exercise of several Religions and forms
of Worship (either upon Pious or Prudential
grounds) under one and the same Government ;
as they may relate both to Discipline and Doctrine,
Ceremonials or Essentials in Worship.



*From inscrip. of St. John manson of Lincolnshire
is further of the Tract.*



L O N D O N, Printed, In the Year, 1678.

2. 1. 2.

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AS Kings reign by God, so they should rule for him and the highest good of their people, especially in matters of Religion, both in maintaining the substance and all essential parts of it, in their vigour and power, by compulsion (in some cases) and humane restraint to force the outward man to obedience in things that are good in themselves :

And for the preservation of unity, to prescribe such Rules, Methods and boundaries in things indifferent, as may bring all to uniformity in worship, and stand as a wall or fence to Gods Vineyards, against the invasions of the little Foxes of Schisms and Factions.

And this is to be done, not only for decency, order, and significancy; but for the preservation of Religion it self. For though they are not parts of it, but Circumstantial; Essentials in a well formed Church cannot be maintained without them, no more than a Tree can be preserved to live without its Bark, or Majesty in a King without Reverence; for that (as the skin to the body) preserves it both in being and beauty: which occasioned St. *Paul's* precept, of having all things done decently and in order, that is, according to appointment, as the original will bear it (for so Dr. *Hawmond* renders the word) [a] And take but away those Regulations of our publick devo-
4 I Cor. 14.
40.

For if the Church of God (his enclosed Garden) be not fenced by good Laws for Conformity, all methods of Devotion are lost, and the Boars of the Forrest (unruly men of factious spirits) will soon break in to destroy and root it up, and offer nothing but the blind and lame to God, in loose and untrusty postures; unbecoming the greatness of earthly Princes in our addresses to them, (and much more to our God) (b) by it to b Mal. 1.
 make their superiors bend to them, if pertinacious obstinacy can do it, when they should bow to their superiors; (c) according c Rom. 13.
 to the Oeconomy of nature it self, where the inferiour Orbs are i Pet 2.
Eph. 4. and 6.

to be guided by the highest Spheres; otherwise the whole fabric would be unhinged and fall in pieces, or at least grow weak by sepeparation: So as a dispensation to several forms of worship in one Church, must prove an Act rather of Division than Comprehension, and encrease emulations and factions (not advance Piety, but plant a Seminary for a continued Schism): Nay, there could be no such encouragement given, but there would be scandal and a way of Seduction in it, (in that novelties never want Courtship and Adorers) and therefore the old way is *Regia via*, Gods way, and only to be contended for;

a *St. Jude Ep.* (a) as it is endeavoured by our Act of Uniformity.

And in this respect, Kings and Queens are chiefly stiled Nursing Fathers and Nursing Mothers to the Church; Fathers for provision and protection; Mothers, for their tenderness and care, who by little stratagems and circumventions, many times bring their Children to an habituated obedience, and keep dangers from them by some outward and extraordinary confinements, both for honesty and order (b).

b *I Cor.* 14.
40.

And for that end, Kings have no meaner a *Depositum* committed to them, than the Crown and Scepter of God and Christ in the Church: for they are as the Lyons about the Throne to secure and guard it; and as Lawgivers in indifferent things (c) (though subject to the direction (not compulsion)

c *Deut.* 33. 4.
5.

d *I Chron.* 23:

e *2 Chron.* 34.
33.

f *Euseb. de vi-*
ta Constant.
Lib. 2. chap.
37, 38, 39.

both of Gods Laws and their own) ought with *David* to prescribe rules for fixed Services and Devotion (d), and with *Josiah*, to compel to Religious duties, and the Laws of their own Kingdoms (as *Hezekiah* did) (e), which *Constantine* the first Christian Emperor imitated (f); but good Kings never imposed on any the visions of their own fancies, nor Licensed the crude and unnourishing vapours of others empty wits (it being below the Majesty of Truth and Religion to do it), but acted according to the Rule of Gods Law; not suffering mens lust to guide them, which ever brings unconstancy with it, and maketh the soul like a distempred body, never well in any position or condition: for then Men (like Bees from one flower to another) will be ever flying from one change to another, and not find enough to satiate the intemperate desires of change (as is observed by a learned Man).

So as it can neither be agreeable to Religion nor Prudence, for a King to suffer variety of Doctrines (or forms in the outward

ward exercise of Religion, though in middle things Supreme power chiefly consists). But more particularly,

First, Kings ought to maintain purity in the doctrinal, practical and essential parts of Religion (without any publick indulgence or dispensations) as that only which can maintain them (*a*) and their Kingdoms, and (as *Elijah*) will prove Chariots and Horsemen for their security; there being no guard to that of piety and zeal for Gods Glory, which they are intrusted to preserve, (even both Tables of the Law) and are not in that case to bear the Sword in vain, which is put into their hands for that use; (*b*) compulsion being in some cases necessary (as protection in others) where commands are contemned (*c*).

Nor doth Christs permission of the Tares to grow, give any just power of toleration (to Princes by Gods Law) in known evils; or forbid punishing of pertinacious contumacy against lawful commands; but only permits and exempts mixed Assemblies (and such men-as have dangerous opinions, and conceal them) where by reason of outward Conformity, none can discriminate the truly Pious and Orthodox, from the Hypocrite; nor doth he forbid their eradication absolutely, but for fear the good seed should also be destroyed; when a connivence to known errors in Doctrine (or to pertinacious Non-Conformists in indifferent things) would make the Magistrates contract the guilt of their crimes, *Judg.* 5. 23; by confirming one in their mistaken Doctrines by such indulgence, and the other in their superstitious believing indifferent things unlawful; to an adoring of the Idol of their own fancy, and uncharitably censuring of all others (even the Church and Government it self) though they bring Hell out of Heaven by it, under pretence of devotion; and the Devil to Rule amongst us in *Samuels* Garment, by the silly charms of a seducing spirit, through the warmth of zeal, when it wants the light of knowledg to guide it. For Zeal, if irregular, like the volatile spirits of poysons when unconfined (by not being luted up in some Vial or Vessel) evaporates into an airy being, only to infect others that suck it in by nearness of conversation: so as some ingredients of a seeming cruelty in our Laws, may prove the most merciful and sovereign remedy (both to reduce and recover them, and preserve the sound from their contagion) if tempered in a proportion to their crimes, by

Ez. 33.
Ecclef. 10.
a Prov. 16. 13,
20, 28.

b Ezra 7.
2 Chron. 34.
33.

c Luke 14. 23.
Rev. 2. 2, 6.
6. 14, 15, 20;
Ch. 3. 15, 16.

pecuniary mulcts, or other confinements; saving some by compassion, others by fear (a), when the violation of any just Law, if wilfully done, is owned unlawful; and that the least minute atom, or airy omission, if habitual, may become the greatest crime, if done with scandal and contempt to Authority; in that the transgression is against Gods Ordinance, that requireth obedience to the Commander, and consists not in the value of the thing commanded by him (it being no less Treason to coyn a Farthing that hath the Kings stamp upon it, than a piece of Gold) according to our Saviours Rule; In that, he that wilfully offends in one, is guilty of the breach of all the Commandments; and upon equal temptation would break the rest: For one little wilful sin (like the first drop in an orifice) will usher in more, and dispose the whole body to such evacuations and eruptions.

2. In prudence (I affirm in general, That) there ought to be no Indulgence as to the publick exercise of any false Religion, or to variety of forms in outward worship: For what safety, unity, decency, or order can there be, in setting up one Congregation against another; when order is the bond of peace that keeps all in unity? For once break that, or tye it but with a slip-knot, and all will be dissolved and come to confusion; which is the womb of Rebellion and Schisms; (so Bishop ~~Band~~ expresses it.)

Nay, such a liberty were to depose Reason (the supreme Monarch) and enthrone the inferior members, which should submit, and not impose; and certainly the doing any thing forced (in such a duel and contention) would give courage and insolency to the enemy to press for more: for if the paille of the Law hath such a breach once made in it, it will let in all the Beasts of the Forest to Rapine and Prey, to the loss of good Subjects, or their dissatisfaction, but not to the making of any other better.

Yet wise Princes may, in regular ways, enlarge any thing that is too strait in matter of Discipline; but they never ought to let clamour, or the unjust discontents of any, to midwife in what they call Reformation; and much less a Toleration of all Sects and Errors: Nor can a King rationally expect a harmony amongst Antipathies, by permitting several forms in one settled Government; though the want of power to main-

maintain his own Laws, may force him possibly at some times to unreasonable (not unlawful) condescensions (when a dam against that current would but inrage it to greater violences).

Yet in such a case, I conceive, he ought rather to make a general Rule of Conformity for all in indifferent things, if possible (than differing ones to parties), by it to lay asleep and bury all animosities the other would maintain, and like oyl upon Paper, would rather harden than soften such rebellious spirits; and render them rather Conquerors than Suppliants.

But I hope God will not submit his own Glory, and our King, to such an Eclipse (though probably it may be attempted; and ill Schemes, by some proposed and calculated for our *Horizon*, since His Majesties compliance in some things hath made them rather impose more, than acquiesce in what they desired); for he that once gives ground, ever loses more in his retreat; (unless it be to rally again with some reserves to maintain his own right more vigorously); so as we ought still to contend to blood, for our Kings freedom in his actions against such, especially those whose Principles are for Resistance and Rebellion (not submission) in things that are contrary to their seditious and superstitious judgements: and hold it lawful to murder the King (if not the man) in whom the Regal power is vested, by dispoiling him of all his *Regalia*, and essentials of *Royalty*. For to allow such liberty, were to unshackle mad-men, and set them free to fury and rage, for the destruction of those that would but endeavour their recovery and preservation; and inflame or strike sparks into those brands that need be quenched, lest they heighten all into a flame.

Nay all forced and irregular condescensions would reflect dishonour and disgrace upon our Government and Governours, and discouragement to all Orthodox Professors, if his Majesty should not maintain (against clamour and violence) what hath been settled and prosperously practised amongst us since the Reformation, and hath had the influences of Heaven formerly, to give it a prolifick vertue, in producing a loyal, zealous, and pious people to beautifie their professions: And Christian Kings should not be out-done by Heathens (inspired by God to it) but send out their Decrees, That whosoever will not do the Law of God, and the Kings Laws (which are not contrary to
it)

it) should have judgement without delay, whether it be to Death, or to Banishment, or to confiscation of Goods, or to Imprisonment, (*a*) (according to the nature of the offence) which was in part practised by the Kings of *Israel*, (*b*) and ought the more to be done (in some Cases) under the Gospel, that hath more of light and direction in it to walk by ; lest liberty should turn into licentiousness, in holding things contrary to the analogy of Faith, and against the Rules of Charity, Purity, Loyalty, Sobriety and Expedience, to the disturbance of the Peace and Unity of the Church and State ; which good and pious Kings ought always to prevent or restrain, by wholesom and penal Laws of Regulation, to fright their people the more to their duties and obedience : for some are to be saved as by fire, 1 *Cor.* 3. 15.

a *Ezra* 7. 25.
26, 27.
b 2 *Chron.* 15.
12, 13, 14, 15,
and 29, & 30,
& 31, & 34.
31, 32, 33.
1 *Chron.* 23.

So as toleration of all Opinions and Sects, (were a cruel mercy, and) would leave men to set up the Trophies of their own ruines, and to adore the idols of their own fancies ; nay, it would increase factions, dissolve unity, and set every one free to make Lust his Law, and disarm the Magistrate (or make him bear the Sword in vain) ; it would legitimate and infranchise all Errors, Schisms, Idolatry, Heresies, and Atheistical Principles, and let in Judgements upon a Nation, and contract a crime, not only by the indulging it ; but the Governour would appropriate to himself the guilt of all others sins that are acted under such a licentious freedom : For though good Laws do not always reform Errors in others, yet they make their crimes not epidemical nor imputable to the Governor of a Nation if executed ; whereas connivence or toleration intitles the supream Magistrates to the others sins and punishments ; as it would do the guilt of innocent blood in Murderers, if it were not forbidden by human Laws and punished, though they many times prevent them not ; for where there is no restraint, sin rides in state, as in its Empire, (as in *Israel*) when there was no King to hinder men from acting according to the Lust of their own hearts ; which freedom is the greatest and worst servitude ; for we may be left sometime to the Devil for good, but never to our selves, but for destruction : However, if a general Toleration to all Religions should at any time be granted upon human and prudential (it can never be justified upon pious and Divine) Principles ; but would have a combination and

and complication of many sins in it, and ever prove the prostituted and pregnant womb of all disorder and licentiousness.

Yet I am not in some Cases wholly against all Indulgence to persons of sober and safe Principles, differing only in points of ceremony and outward forms, from the Government established by Law, though it be to the allowing some few places for publick exercise of their devotion, they Preaching nothing contrary to the Thirty nine Articles of our Church, with an exemption of them from all Oaths (and use of ceremonies) but those of Allegiance and Supremacy; under such other Rules for regulation, as the supreme Magistrate shall think fit; with an exclusion of them from all preferments of dignity, trust and profit, either in Church or State, till they conform to the established Government of our Church; and this only probationally, for some fixed time, where the publick peace and safety of a Nation depends on it; for then in things indifferent in their nature, and in that part of Government that is prudential only, necessity may make it eligible, and there may be a dispensation innocent, and not sinful, in the Supreme Magistrate, though not in them that force it: and such a misfortune sometimes may improve the piety and activity of the Orthodox Clergy, perhaps, if they will make advantage of an enemy, by a holy contention for precedency in all virtues that may add lustre, and gain reverence to their Callings (competition making men the more holy and regular in their comportment, many times, when they would otherways perhaps be more delated and open in their conversation, and more exposed to exceptions, if a censorious eye were not upon them).

But to allow the least evil of sin in our selves or others, for the producing the greatest imaginable good, is in no case justifiable: Nay, the not opposing all things that are sinful (in our several callings and capacities, so far as is lawful) contracts their guilt (*Judg. 5.*) for I may betray a fundamental truth by my silence; and cannot be innocent, if I wilfully connive at, or consent to any thing that is contrary to it, *1 Thes. 5. 11*, for the highest end; (yet the Ark it self must fall, rather than be supported by *Uzzahs* hands) *2 Sam. 6. 6. Rev. 22. Rom. 2. 8.* (*1 Sam. 15*, or any unjustifiable means; for though many things may be lawful, and not expedient; nothing can be expedient, that is not lawful).

f Psal. 50. 28. Nay, I may not only appropriate others sins (*a*) by countenance, approbation, or imitation (while living) but may be guilty of sin in others many thousand years after I am dead, (as well as I did sin before I was born) when they sin by my connivence, example, or infusion of ill Principles derived from me : for as the long precogitation upon any sin with delight, makes it an old and inveterate one, before it be produced into act ; so anothers repetition of any sin by my example or authority (though committed many ages hence) makes it a new sin to me, and to encrease my damnation (so Dr. *Dunn*), as is deduced most justly by Divines from the Parable of *Divus* (*b*) who reflected upon himself (not his brethren, in his charity).

b Luke 16.

c Ber. de consi-
d. Lib. 3.

So as with St. *Bernard* to *Eugenius* (*c*) all our actions require, *trinam considerationem* ; a threefold consideration, as a most learned Divine observes to me, *an liceat, an deceat, an expediat*, to teach us, that discretion, charity, and edification, should be ingredients into all our actions : Nay (*Quorum usus coercetur certis circumstantiis, ea dicuntur, non expedire ; non*

d *Chamier*. 3.
Panzerat 21. 27.

dicuntur, non licere) (*d*) all circumstances are to be considered in lawful things, as times, places, persons, measure, manner, to the making up of a lawful Action ; otherwise a right end, without these, frees not the action from being sinful in the do-

e *Aug.* 4. *Cou-
ra.* *Julian* 3.

er : (*e*) for though lawfulness in a strict sense looks but at the nature and quality of the thing it self, expedience doth weigh all circumstances that conduce to any end ; so as both should concur in our actions, which have a voice in them. For with St. *Augustine*, *Quod est secundum se malum ex genere nullo modo potest esse bonum & licitum* : Because as *Aquinas* saith, *Ad hoc quod aliquid sit bonum requiritur quod omnia recte concurrant* ; in that (*bonum est ex causa integra malum vero ex singularibus defectibus* :) a single defect makes an action sinful, when all cir-

f Psal. 94. 20.

cumstances are required to concur in a good one (*f*) : In that *omne verum est omni vero consentiens & quicquid non licet certe*

g *Pro. Balbo.* *non oportet* (so *Cicero* (*g*).

And no presidents of others acting to the contrary (though some do urge it) ought to be an Authority for us to imitate, when the lawfulness or unlawfulness of no Action is to be grounded upon matter of fact, though done by the Saints of God themselves ; in that they are to be considered as men (Christiany
not

not destroying humanity) subject to many Weaknesses and infirmities; nay, great fallings in particular actions, and may become the more dangerous to others, by the eminency and reputation of the persons that doth them.

For Religion (as the body) is most in hazard when it hath a confluence of ill and noxious humours harboured under a seeming healthful complexion; which interrupting the harmony of a well-tempered constitution (as one saith) at last march under the colours of innocency, to the raising of a civil mutiny at home, and do draw all the unsound parts into conspiracy against it self; and therefore we ought to be very cautious in our actions, for fear of contracting sin, there are so many Avenues to it.

As 1. *Consulendo*, By advising others in evil, as *Achitophel* did *Absolem*, to make good his Treason and Rebellion against *David*; for such shall be taken in their own snare, and perish in or by their own Counsels, saith *Solomon*.

2. *Adulando*, By feeding others vices, and nursing them up with the milk of flattery, in calling good evil, and evil good; (a) which is a beautifying of a people (as the Pagan Negroes ^a Isa. 30: 31 do) by painting with Ink instead of Colours, (b) to which ^b Isa. 9. 16. the greatest we belongs, though the wicked may bleis for a time those whom God abhorreth (c). ^c Psal. 10. 3.

3. *Mandando*, So *Uriah's* Murder and Drunkenness were *David's* sins, though effected by others.

4. *Consentiendo*, For thus *St. Paul* was guilty of *Stephens* Martyrdom (d); and therefore if sinners intice thee, consent ^d A&T. 22. 20. thou not (e): for *sentient eandem poenam, qui consentiunt in eandem culpam.* ^e Prov. 1. 10.

5. *Provocando*, By inflaming or inticing others to sin, as the Harlot in the *Proverbs* (f); for by setting any others house on fire, we are sure to burn and consume our own, if contiguous to it, and be answerable for the others damage. ^f Prov. 7.

6. *Participando*, For if thou seest a Thief attempting to steal, and hast a power to hinder him, and dost it not, thou art guilty of his crime; the not preventing sin in another, where I may do it lawfully, being a promoting of it: And then [*Aequum est ut qui participes fuerunt in peccato; participes fiant in supplicio*] it is but just that we suffer in the punishment, if we partake in the sin, (g) for so wrath came upon *Jehoshaphat* ^g Rev. 18. 4¹ (b): for a good wish to a bad action, is a partaking of the evil (i). ^b 2 Chron. 19. 2.

7. *Omittendo vel Convivendo*, by conniving at, or not reproving others in their sins (*a*), such a love and indulgence to my brother, being the greatest hatred (*b*) : For so God hates us most, when he seems not to hate us at all, by reproving and correcting us, but suffers us to go on in a course of wickedness (*c*).

8. *Defendendo*; for he that defends or maintains a bad cause or action, espouseth the guilt of it; when, *He that justifieth the wicked, or condemneth the just, is abominable before* (or unto) God (*d*), and becomes the greater sinner; in that he hath more of deliberation, and perhaps less of temptation in it, than the other had.

9. *Pracedendo*, by giving ill examples; for if I pluck up the first pale in anothers inclosure, and engage others by my example to lay it waste and common, I am guilty of their trespass, as he that wilfully makes or enlarges any cuts in a Seabank, is liable to repair the damages any receive by those waters. And thus *Jeroboam* made *Israel* to sin (saith the Text), even *exemplum dando*, as well as *imperando*; and *Peter* the *Jews* (*e*).

And to these I might add many other ways (as a learned Divine hath observed to me, by which we derive others sins upon ourselves) to make us vigilant over our own and others Souls, since there are so many Avenues for sin to approach us; and that it is of so subtil and insinuating a nature, as (though the Guards be never so well kept) it will sometimes enter by a false pass, or glide in by the advantage of that gloomy darkness that sometimes over-shadows the best men. And therefore we need add (Ballast to our Sail) examination to every action, to poise and prove it by; it being a safe and noble, no melancholly thing (as one wittily expresses it) to be always in ploughing, weeding, and worming a conscience, in removing (Straws as well as Logs) occasions of temptations, by trying and testing every thought, word, or work, to make them currant, and by filing the Iron, and melting the Ore, to clear and smooth the greatest difficulties, lest our spungy souls (apt to receive any liquor) suck in and imbrace any thing evil, and swell us into such an immense body of sin, as (through custom or impenitency) may become too big to enter into the *Bethesda* of Christs Blood (though what comes there, is ever cleansed and cured).

But (to express it the better, almost in a great Authors words) I conceive a wilful permission or toleration of the most atom, airy sin, is a crime in any man that may prevent it; and much more in a Magistrate, who bears the Sword in vain (if he endeavour not to restrain all appearances of evil), and sheaths it in his own bosom (like *Ely*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 14.) For the Devil brought the Divinity of doing ill, that good might come of it, *Rom.* 3. 8. early into the Church to undermine and ruin us; and of all other evils, Factions in Religion (if countenanced for any civil end) prove the most dangerous; in that, mistaken zeal hath a Cement in it, that makes the strongest Combinations; tyes the closest, and yet breaks the strongest Bonds; violates all Obligations natural and civil; and under a pretence of serving God, brings the Devil in upon his shoulders, and intrones him for a Deity, acting all Rapines and Disorders under a pretence of Piety; so as the mutual Communications of Members in civil bodies, that should be a means of common advantages, is corrupted; and men live rather to stir up Animosities, than pay the Duties of Charity to Neighbours, or of Obedience to Superiors; not only to the invasion of Order and Unity, but the undermining of Christianity it self, though pretended Religion be the Engine by which they work; and all this to shape Government at the last for the Interest of the strongest party; ever pretending to fight for their God, when they fight against their King; and glory in their Crime, as the highest virtue: so as Religion, the great instrument of Peace and Piety, proves the greatest Incendiary.

For a light distemper in the Church, proves many times a Contagion in the State, and is ever to be cured by Corrosives, where Lenitives work not; but with more moderation to those that agree with us (than to such as depart from us) in our settled Doctrine, though they artificially pretend to be in these times the great Patrons and Vindicators of our Church (by it with the unnatural Viper to eat out the bowels of their own Mother); for there are many now of our High Clergy, that with a strange impudence do intitle her to their Errors (and want not the countenance and encouragements of many great ones to invite them by preferments to it); yet their Arguments are rather Railings, than Reasons, by slighting and defaming our most Orthodox Doctrine (concerning Faith, Grace, and Justification)

with

with disowned and false consequences, to make way for the entertainment of their dangerous Errors, which are both derogatory to Gods honour, and tend to the shaking the sure foundations of our Christian Faith, comfort and assurance of our spiritual Estate, by improving *Arminianism* (beyond the modesty of its Author) into great degrees of *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*; and press them, as agreeing with the Articles of the Church of England; though I dare confidently affirm, that both the Compilers of the Articles, and the eminent men of our Church in succession, have ever declared their Judgments of them (concerning Election, Justification, Renovation, Faith, good Works, Final Perseverance and Apostacy) in all their Writings and Sermons upon those Subjects, to be otherways (some few excepted, and those of late years); and do all agree in a Harmony of Doctrine with most of the reformed Churches abroad, in those Tenents: As Bishop *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Parker*, *Bale*, *Jewel*, *Bilson*, *Andrews*, *Buckeridge*, *Abbot*, *Babington*, *Lake*, *Sandes*, *Hall*, *Morton*, *Davenet*, *King*, *Carleton*, *Williams*, *Morty*, *Person*, *Sandersen*, *Gauden*, *Reynolds*, *Ward*, Arch-Bishop *Usher*, and all the Irish Clergy, and other the most eminent men amongst us; as *Hooker*, *Feild*, *Downham*, *Dun*, *Jackson*, *Preston*, *Perkins*, *Fenly*, *Thorndike*, *Pemle*, *Meade*, *Hales*, and infinite others in their Treatises upon those Subjects (though some of them differ about the Object of Election); so as the other *Novelists*, whose Authors have now a great possession of our Pulpits (by the favour of those that design the introducing of their Errors) do now (by scandalous Imputations of dangerous Doctrines to others) magisterially condemn our Orthodox Tenents; and by it (though they press outward Conformity and Communion) I believe are the great disturbers of the Peace of our Church, and causes of keeping many of our Anti-Ceremonial Separatists from joyning with us; Errors in Doctrine affrighting them more than other circumstantial things, and makes them look upon us as an Apostatizing Church.

And therefore I could wish some care were taken to conform them to the Doctrine of the Articles of our Church (as well as the others to her Discipline), at least to silence their Pens and Preaching upon those Subjects (according to former Declarations of the late King of blessed Memory), as they are more dangerous, as is conceived, to undermine our Church in her Purity of Do-

Doctrine, than the Papists themselves, in that they have the countenance of Authority, and insinuate their opinions by nearer approaches to the Truth, and less dangerous consequences to the civil Power, than the other; though some of them have endeavoured seemingly to Preach, though not force us out of our Properties, in relation to the Kings Power and Right in them, and might do mischief, did not the goodness both of our Sovereign and Laws, secure our interest (and provide against the spreading of such Errors, as well as those of the Papists and Sectaries) if duly executed.

In order to which, for my own judgment, I believe, that if the Laws were fewer and less penal, they would prove more effectual; in that great sufferings move commiseration and remission in those that should instrumentally execute them, especially where the severity reaches to the undoing of Families, as in Cases of Recusancy, for a negative disobedience in not coming to Church, when milder punishments would be more Christian, and perhaps more successful in order to their compliance.

But for the restrictive part of Laws that secure our peace and Church, hinder factious, seditious Meetings, Conventicles, or any thing that may countenance or spread any erroneous opinions (especially those of the *Papists*), I think they cannot be too severe, nor too quick in finding out ways to discriminate such of them as are bosom and concealed enemies to our Religion and Laws still amongst us: (yet I wish it not so much for their punishments, as our own security) the excluding them (upon such a discovery) from all places of Trust or Power that have any influence upon our Government (but not from the charge of those that are in themselves penal): And for that end, I would humbly propose some Law to be made to the effect following.

1. That all persons suspected of Recusancy or Separation from our Church, being presented for such (at any Quarter-Sessions where they live) or are thought fit by the Sessions originally without presentment to be summoned thither, shall upon notice appear at the next Sessions after, there held, and there acquit themselves both by proof upon Oath of having received the Sacrament in their several Parish-Churches as the Law requires, and take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy then in open Sessions, or have a Conviction of Recusancy Recorded

corded against them as to the ends before mentioned ; but not to the forfeiture of their Estates, unless otherways proceeded against upon other pœnal Laws that shall continue in force ; which will both unmask and disarm them (in a great measure) of power to hurt us ; and be a speedy and merciful way for their discrimination.

2. That all Benefic'd Parsons and Lecturers, should once in every Three Months be obliged to Read the Articles of our Church in their Desks or Pulpits, before or after Divine Service, in the audience of the Congregation, and there make their solemn protestation before God of their consent and submission to them, and our Homilies, and Common Prayer, as containing the Doctrine and Devotions of the Church of *England* ; and that in their most literal and genuine sense, which would much remove Jealousies, silence Clamour, and bring them to a Test, that design and openly wish an alteration of them.

And further, to prevent all the aforementioned and growing mischiefs, it were well, if some further Test could be found out to unscreen and lay open to exception such persons as by their excellent parts and moralities, gain reputation to their erroneous opinions, and have in effect eclipsed and much lessened the Grace and Glory of Christ, by making Grace and Vertue convertible, and advancing Natural Religion, at least, to a share in the salvation of Man ; whereas, though our Church teacheth the same necessity of a good, moral and pious life (that they also assert) as fruits and effects of a lively Faith ; yet she holds we are saved by Faith alone, though not by Faith that is alone, without producing good works ; Moral obedience, with inward sanctification, being the only evidences and grounds of a Christians comfort, according to the Articles of our Church : and I think suspension (both *ab officio*, and *beneficio*) is too little for such as own their Mother, and yet wilfully rebel against her determinations ; and scandalously defame (by Satyrical invectives) those that have been most eminent in the Reformation, and in our Church ever since ; or by bold untruths, would make some of the most considerable amongst us to patronize errors : Nay, representing St. *Augustine* himself (as more pious than rational) though one of the greatest Lights, and most-to-be Reverenced person, both for Prudence, Knowledge, Morality, Piety, Learning, clearness of Judgement, and indefatigable Industry, that
ever

ever lived in the Christian Church, since the Apostles days; and it hath ever been the boast and glory of our Church, to have agreed with his Judgment in our Articles (and therefore with all others, so far as they depart not from his Principles, concerning Election, Faith, Justification, Sanctification, and good Works); though it is now by some made a matter of detraction, scorn, and defamation to maintain them Orthodoxly, which certainly ought not to be suffered either in our Pulpits or Presses by any Licensed Authority; but rather to give some check, or fix some mark of dishonour on them that are so insolently ignorant: or it may in time produce more sad and open divisions in our Church, than is generally foreseen (as it did in *Scotland* in their first Rebellion against our late Sovereign *Charles* the First, which was not so much occasioned by the Imposition of Episcopacy and Ceremonies upon them, as by new Doctrine (especially that of *Arminius*) then beginning to receive countenance and encouragement both here and there, which I hope the Wisdom and Piety of our King and Parliament will by Gods mercy prevent; not suffering any, either out of profaneness, Faction, or the Gaiety of a luxurious Wit, to abuse and turn the greatest and most serious concerns of a Christian into Ridiculous and Burlesk Levity (fitter for a Heathen Stage, than an Orthodox Church to admit of), and are so far from a sober conviction of any real error in others, as they only make Investives against forced and fancied consequences of their own, drawn from the justifiable Tenents of others, who in maintaining Justification by Faith alone, include all sincere, universal, and persevering Obedience, as fruits of it (if true and saving), and parts of the Evangelical Covenant, in relation to the qualification of the persons justified; yet in ascribing the whole work to God of Mans salvation, they exclude not Mans co-operation, but make it part of the Decree, which is irrespective in regard of the person chosen (nothing in us moving him), but not in respect of the means by which we must attain salvation; so as to us, and for our application, those Promises are wholly conditional, according to the tenure of the Gospel; but are always the portion of the Elect, by the powerful working of Grace in them, and (as Dr. *Hamond* in his Sermon upon *Matth. 10. 15.* phraseth it) the constraining Spirit of God, which by its infinite Charms of mercy, doth controule, convince, and convert the sinner, and make him con-

cur to the making of his calling and election sure, by a holy perseverance in the means, (according to that of 1 *Pet.* 1. and 2 *Pet.* 1.) upon all which he enlargeth himself in his Sermons upon *Act.* 3. 26. *Ez.* 16. 30. *Phil.* 4. 13. *Matth.* 1. 23. *Jer.* 5. 12. *Luk.* 18. 2. *Act.* 18. 30, but chiefly on *Gal.* 6. 15, and 1 *Tim.* 1. 15, and keeps harmony with the eminent men and Martyrs of our Church in it, who maintain that Justification, as it is Gods *Act in foro divino*, is the eternal emanation of his own goodness to his Elect, and considereth nothing (objective in them) antecedent to his Decree of their salvation, though Faith, Repentance, and Obedience are certain effects and consecutive parts of it, in regard of its execution, and is *actio indivisibilis*, as it proceeds from Gods Eternal Love, Mercy, and Goodness to them in Christ. See Bp. *Sandersons* 2 *Ser. ad Cler.*

Though considering Justification (*in foro hominis*, or *conscientia*) in respect of evidence or actual claim, it is (*actio divisibilis*) a divided act, and capable of growth and degrees; so as the Saints assurance of salvation, is a property of (though not always inseparable from) a lively saving Faith, and depends upon great manifestations and advances in Piety, and may be lost; but the truly regenerate man cannot fall finally, though he may totally, from Grace, in regard of evidence, and (as Mr. *Hales* of St. *Peters* Fall, Dr. *Dunn* on *Isa.* 65. 20.) may live in a state of damnation for some time, as it signifies something against the habit of sanctifying qualities inherent; but never can fall from the Grace of Gods Election, as it signifies the grace and favour inherent in the Person of God; he may fall from his own Righteousness, but never from Gods purpose to save him, nor can he lose the immortal seed by which he was begotten, 1 *Joh.* 3. For it is as certain that repentance will follow after any sin in a man once justified, as that good works never go before Justification (according to St. *Aug. de fide & operibus*, our Homily of Justification, and the twelfth Article of our Church); yet we are not to judg of our selves by Gods Decrees, but our own Actings; yet our Justification is, not alterable, imperfect, commensurable only to our Sanctification, and contingent; but as Gods works are intire, done in him at once, and perfected as soon as begun; quickned in their conception, and full shaped in their quickning; so as to Gods Eternity, the last Trump is already sounded; in that his whole duration is but one permanent point,

point, without parts or division, never changing his will, though he wills and effects a change in his; his purpose being his will to save them; his predestination ordering the means, as Dr. *Dunn* hath it in his Sermon on *Isa.* 63. 20. and *Hos.* 2. 19.

Nor doth this Doctrine (as some scandalously asperse it) encourage to presumption, or give hopes of gaining glory, but by the fruits of godliness: for God will judge every one according to his works. Yet it is not habitual Justice ingrafted, but eternal Justice imputed, that justifies and infallibly saves all the Elect in Christ, according to Gods Covenant and revealed Will (so learned *Hooker* in his discourse of Justification) through the imputation of his active and passive obedience; though our evidence, comfort, and application of it, is founded upon the fruits of Sanctification, and Testimony of the Holy Spirit with ours (*Rom.* 8.) and not upon Gods Decrees, if considered in an abstracted sense from them: for he saves none but by faith, repentance, and obedience; nor damns any, unless for a final impenitency against means of conversion afforded by God to all within the Pale of the Church; all men being made salvable by Christs dying for all, and have sufficient grace given them to work out their salvations, if the impediment be not in themselves (nay efficient also in a moral, not physical sense), though they want that effectual grace of God by which, and his infinite wisdom, he doth so sweetly order and attempter all outward means (in such a congruous manner, and makes such gracious inward applications and insinuations, by the secret imperceptible motions and operations of his Holy Spirit into the hearts of his chosen ones), as that, *de facto*, the will shall not finally resist; and all this *ex mero beneplacito Dei*: yet there may be *certitudo objecti*, in regard of Gods purpose, though not *certitudo subjecti*, in regard of the Elects apprehensions at all times, as Bishop *Sanderfon* expresses it, which is the sound, ancient, and Orthodox Tenent of our Church.

Yet in all this, the will suffers no compulsion from God; but he draws, and we run; he inclines, and we embrace; he strengthens, and we work; or rather not we, but the grace of God in us; for he gives not only a (*posse*) power to will good; as to *Adam* in the state of Innocence; but a (*non posse*) power to his Elect, not to will otherways, not to sin, 1 *John* 3. habitually, or to fall into any presumptuous sin, without an actual repentance

following, in which Grace sways so powerfully, as if the Will had no freedom in the Action; and the will acts freely, as if grace had no sway in the Election; yet when we co-operate with grace, only by grace, God not forcing the will, but powerfully and infallibly moving it to determine it self in the performance of all Righteousness, and by Faith to apprehend Christs perfect obedience, as imputed to us for the defects in ours, to make us capable of glory, into which no unclean thing must enter; nor can any be admitted by the Remission of their sins only (which freeth but from the pains of Hell) without the Imputation of Christs perfect obedience; for he pronounceth not his sentence at the day of judgment, by (though according unto) his Decrees; but proceeds judicially to conviction upon evidence, and judgeth and rewardeth all men by, and according to their works; and there being made righteous, by Gods acceptance of Christs Righteousness for them, to supply the defects of their best performances, and perfect the imperfections of their most sincere, universal, and persevering obedience. And against these Truths thus delivered, few amongst us (that I know of) has the impudence to clamour; but yet there are many learned and rational men that design to undermine them, and superciliously and magisterially do by Insinuations and artifices seem to impose new and dangerous notions upon us, by wresting and slighting (not confuting) ours.

1. By pressing Moralities, not as fruits and effects of a saving Faith, but as the means (with a general and historical Faith) to save us, when produced by that common and universal grace God gives to all mankind in Christ; by which Doctrine no man can have a firm assurance of his own salvation (when Adam fell in the state of innocency, without any temptation from within) nor of a visible Church on Earth, if founded upon no other bottom.

2. By asserting, That Justification is conditional, alterable and commensurate only to our Sanctification (so as good works must precede it, contrary unto the 11, 12, 13, Articles of our Church; and that a man may fall from it finally (though it be the act of the Judge) when Sanctification is but the qualification of the person justified, who may fall from it in some degrees,

grees, but not totally, Gods Love being free, and as unchangeable as himself.

3. By allowing Christs passive obedience for the taking away of sin, but not the imputation of his active obedience for our Justification and Salvation; so as they differ only from *Socinus* in the first part, but come near him in making Christs obedience only an Exemplar to us; ours for his sake to be accepted and rewarded, through the infinite merit of Christ (as God and Man) imputed, can only make us capable of an infinite reward, or make our works clean and pure in the sight of God: For which, read Bishop *Andrews* Sermon on *Jer.* 23. 6, Mr. *Mead* upon *Matt.* 11. 28, 29, and on *Psal.* 2. *Psal.* 50, *Psal.* 38, who agree with St. *Paul* in 1 *Cor.* 1. 30, and 2 *Cor.* 5. 21, and the great, ancient, and eminent Divines of our Church, some of which I have before mentioned.

4. By maintaining Gods Decree of Salvation to any, is conditional and contingent; so as from the contemplation of it, no Child of God, or tender Conscience, can gather comfort or any assurance of stability (though they use the means to gain it), in that they make the Decree to depend upon the Condition, and the Condition upon the actions and use of that general Grace God gives to all, without a more particular and constraining Grace (as D. *Hammond* expresseth it) for the determination of their wills to good; which is contrary to St. *Paul* (*Ep.* 2. 8, 9, 10.) and the 17th Article of our Church, when the Condition depends upon the Decree (and is part of it) which ordains the means to be performed by his chosen ones as certainly as the end; so as they cannot fail of either, but are preserved by the Power of God unto Salvation through Faith, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. Which if true, hath a vital principle in it, and is both comprehensive and productive of all other gracious operations.

5. By teaching that Gods election (which is only an Emanation of his free love and goodness to his chosen ones, *quia complacuit*, *Ep.* 1. does depend upon foreseen Faith and Works in them, that are only fruits and effects following, which wholly inverts the Methods of God in his Decree, making him to go out of himself in his works, *ab intra*, and they not to be, *ex mero beneplacito*; which is derogatory to Gods Grace, against
Scripture,

Scripture, and the Articles of our Church.

6. By ascribing less to the Grace of God, than to the Will of man in his final determination of himself to good, as in *Peter* and *Judas*; for supposing them to have all outward means of conversion equally applied, and that one should be effectually converted, and not the other, they place the discriminating Power in the will of man, and not in the superfluence of Gods Grace; by it making the determination of Gods Will and Decree, to depend upon mans, not mans upon Gods; which is the setting up an Idol of their own shaping for the true God, and shakes the foundation of an humble, sober, and well-grounded Christian confidence, in regard of our own weaknesses, which are so great, as none can assure themselves of final perseverance, or that there is a holy Church on earth, or Saints in Heaven, upon such Principles.

Yet these dangerous Tenents for some late years, have much spread and prevailed amongst us, by the distraction of the times, the remissness (if not indulgence) of Governors in the Church, and the advantage the Patrons of those Opinions have had, both by our Press and Pulpits, to vent such crude, raw and undigested matter, though sufficiently refuted by our Orthodox Clergy, as contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, and the Reformed Churches abroad; as may appear by the ever to be revered Synode of *Dort*, which (however vilified by some scurrilous Pens) is to be received for confirmation of us in our Articles and Tenents, so far as they agree with them in the most chief points there controverted, in which some of the most eminent of our Church, both for Learning, Prudence, and Piety, did concur, being delegated by King *James* of blessed memory to act with them: and though they extend not to us by way of obligation, they ought not to be condemned by any person by artifices, (not Arguments) and by affirming perhaps a Truth to insinuate a false and illogical conclusion, That their determinations were erroneus, because no one ancient Father (except *St. Augustine*) did agree with them in all things; which could not be expected, because the Church until his time was a Stranger to those disputes, and that God by his Providence, (as light from darkness) did by the labours of that unparallel'd Saint, illustrate many Truths by the errors of

of *Pelagius* and others; yet asserted nothing but with the authority of the Fathers, in what he dogmatically taught: however we might vindicate the Council of *Dort* by an Argument as fallacious as the other; in affirming, that not one of the Ancient Fathers did ever reject or disown their opinions in all particulars, or differ from them in any material thing concerning Grace and Free-will.

But to recall my self in this little digression, I shall sum up all in this, That my design in these Papers (if your Lordship think fit to communicate them) is both to caution and undeceive the ignorant, that by their admiration of some mens persons, with an implicate faith receive such dangerous and uncomfortable notions as are before mentioned. And to shew it necessary that there should be some care to suppress them, as they relate to Doctrine, and the disturbance of the Church, which may be most endangered by those in communion with it (Poyson being sooner taken from the hand of a Friend than an open Enemy). So as I hope you will pardon my freedom of expressing my thoughts, and that your Lordship will be instrumental for the silencing of such opinions for the future, by some prudent restraints and discountenance, with an addition of such Tests for the Clergy in general, as may often be renewed, and by Oath oblige them to maintain the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as now established by Law, and contained in her 39 Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, in their most literal and genuine sense, to secure us both against *Popery*, *Pelagianism*, *Socinianism*, and *Arminianism*.

Yet, I wish only the preservation of Truth without animosity to persons; not any mans ruine, but reformation: But that those that have left their first Principles by which they were admitted into the Church, may be thrown out, if they refuse to submit, no sober person can except against them that hath once subscribed unto them, without great crime and danger to the established Doctrine; which doth clearly assert, That we are justified by Faith alone without works, though, *a posteriore*, they are certain and necessary consequences (as Breathing is of Life) and fruits of that Faith which justifieth; and are conditions, by the performance whereof we can only apply the promises to our selves, of our being accepted with God through Faith,

Faith in Christ, by the imputation of his Active and Passive obedience; in that our Faith (*fere conscientia*) cannot appear either to our selves or others to be true and saving, but by holiness, good works, sincerity, and universal obedience, as effects of our Sanctification, which is the way to Glory (with St. Bernard) but no cause of it.

FINIS.
